THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • WEDNESDAY • SEPTEMBER 15, 2021 • ₹7.00 • PAGES 20 • LATE CITY EDITION

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INDIA, UK LOOK TO START FTA TALKS BY NOVEMBER 1

India and the UK are aiming to start negotiations for the proposed bilateral free trade agreement (FTA) by November 1

BOTH NATIONS VYING FOR EARLY HARVEST DEAL

The move is aimed at enhancing trade and investments between the two countries. Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said the two countries are moving towards an early harvest trade agreement, with a comprehensive FTA as the next step. The UK also expressed hope that there is a "strong possibility" to get an early agreement on trade

UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER'S INTERESTS

- Stakeholder consultations have been conducted for the pact
- Bilateral working groups have been formed to understand each other's interests
- Union minister Goyal said that there is keenness to have an early conclusion of negotiations

$13.11 bn

BILATERAL TRADE BETWEEN INDIA AND THE UK IN 2020-21

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Modi's ministers get efficiency schooling

First in-person meeting of the council of ministers; presentation on Covid vaccination drive also made

MANISH ANAND @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday held a marathon meeting of his council of ministers at Rashtrapati Bhavan auditorium. It was their first in-person meeting since the expansion of the ministry in July last.

It is learnt that the meeting was designed to be a brainstorming session. The BJP had recently held seven such brainstorming sessions on specific themes.

The meeting came in the backdrop of the NDA government seeking to expedite the implementation of the BJP's vision documents for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections amid important Assembly polls early next year.

The meeting went on for about four hours, sources said. It also took place on a day when the BJP named Modi as its prime ministerial candidate in 2013. Then BJP chief Rajnath Singh had announced Modi as the PM candidate of the party on September 14 that year.

Government officials were stoic in their silence over what transpired during the meeting. However, it is understood that the ministers were given an account of the status of the Covid-19 vaccination in the country in the backdrop of the threat of a third wave of the pandemic and the approaching festive season.

Chintan shivir

Presentations were made at the Chintan Shivir by Mandaviya and Pradhan on efficiency and time management. Four more such Chintan Shivirs will be held, sources said

One source said issues concerning the agriculture ministry were also taken up during the marathon meeting, but there were no official confirmation. The NDA government at the Centre continues to grapple with the farmers' protests over three farm sector reform laws passed by Parliament. Their agitation has gone on for over nine months, with the BJP bracing for its electoral fallout in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, which are due to go to the polls next year.

Incidentally, the prime minister had held two such online meetings with his council of ministers after the reshuffle during which he had tasked the newcomers to study in-depth the BJP's vision documents for the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections and draw up an actionable agenda for the short and medium terms.

Investors want Goenka out of Zee

SESA SEN @ New Delhi

INDIAN promoters are increasingly confronted with shareholder activism, backed by institutional investors and proxy advisory firms. The latest to face the heat is Zee Entertainment Enterprises (ZEEL) with its largest shareholders calling for ouster of MD Punit Goenka, son of the Essel Group chairman Subhash Chandra, and appointing six new independent directors.

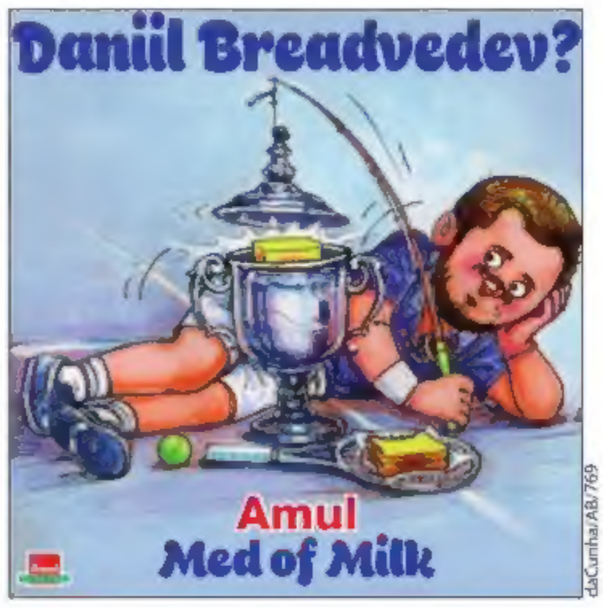
Invesco Developing Markets Fund and OFI Global China Fund, which together hold 17.88% stake in ZEEL, have called an extra-ordinary general meeting for the removal of Goenka and independent directors Ashok Kurien and Manish Chokhani.

Analysts, however, are not amused as they say the exit of the Goenka family, which currently owns just 3.99% in ZEEL, is a matter of time. "There is a good professional team in key departments below the MD level. The question is, will they stay if Goenka leaves?" said Abneesh Roy, executive director (research), Edelweiss Securities.

Meanwhile, at the AGM on Tuesday, Goenka did not disclose anything on issues related to the call for management change. Rather, he chose to defend the corporate governance track record of the company. The verdict on key resolutions that were up for voting at the AGM, including adoption of financial results, will be out on September 16. All eyes are now on the crucial EGM, which will officially decide the fate of Goenka.

2 directors step down

Ahead of the AGM on Tuesday, independent directors Ashok Kurien and Manish Chokhani resigned from the board, ZEEL said



Don't raze temples in a hurry, CM tells officials

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

DEMOLITION of religious structures has taken a twist with Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Tuesday directing officials across the State not to demolish temples in a hurry. Bommai said he will answer the issue of demolition of temples in Mysuru district on the floor of the House.

He said that a show-cause notice has been issued to Mysuru Deputy Commissioner Dr Bagadi Gautham and Tahsildar Mohana Kumari for not taking people into confidence before demolishing temples in the district. He said that the government will study the 2009 Supreme Court order in detail and discuss it at the cabinet meeting. Detailed instructions will be issued in two days, he added.

After legislators from all parties and Hindu organisation protested against the demolition of Hucchagani Mahadevappa temple at Nanjangud in Mysuru district, the State Government on Tuesday decided to halt all demolitions across the state.

Revenue Minister R Ashoka told The New Indian Express that the Supreme Court order on the demolition of places of worship, including temples, constructed unauthorisedly, is not new as the directions came 12 years ago. "Officials in Mysuru have taken action based on the court order. But at the same time, people's sentiments should have been respected," he added.

"The apex court order states that temple authorities should be allowed to shift places of worship on their own. Officials were supposed to convince them. But without doing that, officials in Mysuru proceeded to demolish the temple, which is not right," he said.

CONTINUED ON: P4

46 PLACES OF WORSHIP TO BE REMOVED IN BELAGAVI, SAYS DC

Belagavi Deputy Commissioner MG Hiremath on Tuesday said that there are 46 places of worshi situated over roads in Belagavi city limits that have been identified for removal. Among these, 17 have already been removed, the DC said. "We are taking all precautions to remove and relocate these temples, ensuring that they don't suffer any damage during the process," Hiremath said.

Now, Bellandur flyover may go down for Metro

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

AFTER the demolition of Rs 21 crore Jayadeva flyover in 2020 to make way for Namma Metro lines, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (BMRCL) is targeting the Bellandur Flyover and a series of five foot over bridges between Central Silk Board and Kadubeesanahalli Underpass to make way for the Metro line. Also set for demolition are hoardings, signage, bus shelters and FoBs (including the one in Bellandur) for the Outer Ring Road Metro line.

BMRCL wrote to the road infrastructure division of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike in July to either dismantle the five foot over bridges or give it permission to demolish them. Even as the reply is awaited, BMRCL is planning to shoot off another letter by including Bellandur flyover in the list of structures to be demolished. They have said that a BBMP Engineer should be assigned to work in coordination with BMRCL during demolitions. "If things go as per plan, Bellandur Flyover will be the second flyover to be demolished to make way for a Metro line," said a BMRCL official, requesting anonymity.

P2

HAL TO MANUFACTURE PARTS FOR ADOUR GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN OF ROLLS-ROYCE

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

AS part of an agreement signed with Rolls-Royce, Defence Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) will supply spares for the Adour Global Supply chain and support the multi-national company's defence customer base globally. Adour is a twin-spool, counter-rotating turbofan engine by Rolls-Royce.

The agreement was signed between B Krishna Kumar, Executive Director (Engine & IMGT), HAL, and Abhishek Singh, senior vice-president - Defence, India and South East Asia, Rolls-Royce, in Bengaluru on Tuesday.

This follows an MoU signed between the two firms during the Aero India 2021 in February to establish an authorised maintenance centre for Adour at HAL.

The agreement strengthens the ecosystem for Adour engines in India by building on HAL's existing capabilities for manufacturing and supporting Adour engines for Indian customers over several decades, HAL said.

R Madhavan, Chairman & Managing Director, HAL, said, "We look forward to working with Rolls-Royce to serve global market for supply of spares and MRO (maintenance, repair and overhaul) of Adour engines." This is the first order for supply of spares for the Adour Global Supply chain, he said, expressing hope that that the partnership would expand the defence sourcing footprint in India.

Kishore Jayaraman, president, Rolls-Royce India and South Asia, said it is a significant step in strengthening the defence manufacturing ecosystem in the country that will "catapult India's vision for the defence sector to 'make in India' for the world".

NATIONWIDE	SEPT 13	SEPT 14
Fresh cases	27,254	25,404
Recoveries	37,687	32,127
Deaths	219	339
KARNATAKA	**SEPT 13**	**SEPT 14**
Fresh cases	673	559
Recoveries	1,074	1,034
Deaths	13	12

AFGHANISTAN

DONORS PLEDGE $1.2 BILLION IN FUNDS

The UN drummed up over $1.2 billion in emergency pledges to help 11 million Afghans facing an escalating humanitarian crisis at home and elsewhere, as the UN Human Rights chief voiced concerns | P12

EXPRESS READ

Exports up 45.76 pc to $33.28 bn in August

New Delhi: India's exports jumped 45.76 per cent to $33.28 billion in August on account of healthy growth in segments like engineering, petroleum products, gems and jewellery, and chemicals, even as the trade deficit widened to a four-month high of $13.81 billion. Imports in August rose 51.72 per cent to $47.09 billion.

2 fall to death from Electronics City flyover

Bengaluru: Two people, including a woman, fell to their death from the Electronics City flyover to the road below, after a speeding car hit their bike. The freak accident occurred on Tuesday evening. The car driver's condition is also said to be critical, and he has been hospitalised. The police are yet to ascertain the duo's identity | P5

Students protesting against NEP caned

Bengaluru: Around 300 students protesting against the National Education Policy-2020 (NEP-2020) were lathicharged by the police near KR Circle on Tuesday morning as they tried to march towards Vidhana Soudha, where prohibitory orders under Section 144 have been clamped because of the ongoing legislature session | P7

Fresh to home
WEDNESDAY MARKET
Another Wednesday. Another meaty mid-week sale!
Fresh Products | Best Deals | 90 Min Delivery
500g Chicken (Curry cut) + 400g Seer (Steaks)
₹449
Bangda/ Mackerel ₹298/kg
Prawns (whole) ₹498/kg
130g Chicken Cutlet ₹1*
Use code: CTL1
*Ready-to-cook. On order above ₹699, GST applicable.
2000+ Products
22 Lakh Customers
100+ Quality Checks
No Antibiotic Residue
No Added Chemicals
Order online at: Freshtohome.com
90 Minute Delivery
T&C Apply. All prices except for Chicken Cutlets are inclusive of taxes. Offers valid only for today and till stocks last. Images used are for representative purposes only and may differ from the actual products.

Kids walk 5 km, cross two streams... all for studies

With bags on their backs, students cross a stream on foot as they head to school, near Kokkaragundi village in Gadag district | EXPRESS

RAGHOTTAM KOPPAR @ Gadag

IT is a tough life for the children of Kokkaragundi village in Gadag district as they walk 5 km and cross two streams to reach their school every day. Their troubles only increase when it rains with the streams flowing in full force.

It was not all this bad before the pandemic struck as the North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC) was running regular bus services to the village. But since the two lockdowns, the number of buses plying to the village has been reduced to just two, one at 7 am and the other at 9 pm.

The students too were not troubled as schools were closed and they stayed put in the village. But with classes six to 12 reopening over the last few weeks, nearly 50 children from the village have to face extreme hardship to continue their studies.

As this village in Shirahatti taluk does not have a school, these children can go either to Bellatti or Balehousur, which are 5-6 km away.

It is a daily nightmare for the parents too, as they are worried about the safety of their children.

Restart buses: Villagers

Villagers have now demanded that the transport corporation resume services, at least to help students reach and come back from school.

Villagers said, "We brought it to the notice of NWKRTC officials two weeks ago and they said the services would start soon. But we are still waiting. We are thinking of launching a protest in two to three days, and informed the Shirahatti tahsildar office on Tuesday morning about it."

A NWKRTC official of Shirahatti stated, "We have informed our higher officials. We will start the services as Covid numbers have gone down."